

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Official Action dated May 16, 2007. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due consideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 7-9 are under consideration in this application. Claims 1-6 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 7-9 are being amended, as set forth in the above marked-up presentation of the claim amendments, in order to correct formal errors and/or to better recite or describe the features of the present invention as claimed. All the amendments to the claims are supported by the specification. Applicant hereby submits that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Informality Rejection

Claims 1 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Since Claims 1 and 6 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the rejection thus becomes moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 8-9 would be allowed if rewritten into independent form to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 8 as depending from the originally filed claim 7 was allowable. Since (1) claim 8 is being rewritten into independent form to include the limitations of the originally filed claim 7, (2) claim 9 depends from claim 8, and (3) claim 7 is being amended to recite only the amendments added via the prior response and to depend from the allowable claim 8, claims 7-9 are in condition for allowance.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1, 3 and 5-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) as being unpatentable over Sugiyama et al. (US 5,553,051), claim 2 was rejected over Sugiyama '051 in view of Isshiki et al. (US 2003/0218955), claim 4 was rejected over Sugiyama '051 in view of Van Kesteren (WO 03/034412), and claim 7 was rejected over Isshiki '955 in view of Sugiyama '051.

Since claims 1-6 are being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the relevant rejections thus become moot. Since claim 7 is being amended to recite only the amendments added via the prior response and to depend from the allowable claim 8, claim 7 is in condition for allowance.

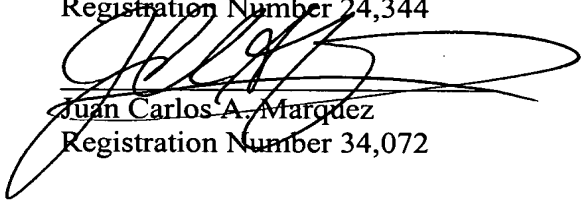
Conclusion

In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art reference upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicant respectfully contends that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative at the address and telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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